

I oppose loosening the rules designed to promote and protect diversity of media ownership. These rules were adopted to ensure that the public would receive a diverse range of viewpoints from the media, and not simply the opinions of a handful of media conglomerates.

Under your plans, one company in a community will be able to own the newspaper, several TV and radio stations, the cable system, and the principal Internet access company. There will be fewer owners of networks, stations, and newspapers nationwide. This does not serve democracy or American culture; it simply insures increased vertical integration and profit making by fewer owners.

I urge you to follow the lead of Ohio Senator lawmaker Mike Dewine who recently wrote to Chairman Michael Powell saying:

"A robust democracy depends on sources that offer diverse and independent voices and opinions to citizens. Over the years, courts have endorsed -- and logic supports -- the notion that more diverse media ownership most likely leads to more diverse media voices. While consolidation may lead to some economic efficiencies, the commission must carefully weigh any potential efficiencies against the fundamental and real need to protect the ability of citizens to access differing views on news and public affairs."

I urge you to stop this reckless plan and to hold public hearings on how the growing consolidation of media ownership affects my community and the nation.

Sincerely,  
Richard James